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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains curriculum guidelines and checklists designed to assist vocational educators in identifying sex bias, sex role stereotyping, and sex discrimination. The first section provides suggestions made by Ohio vocational educators for providing for sex equity in vocational programs. Following specific suggestions for recruitment, facility, placement, and program content, suggestions and comments specific to program areas of study are set forth. The second section lists criteria for sex-fair materials and then provides guidelines and checklists for assessment of curriculum materials for sex equity on four bases: language, roles, omissions, and audio-visual materials. Several consciousness-raising activities for the classroom are listed in the third section, which may be helpful to teachers, counselors, and students in becoming aware of sex bias. The final section discusses use of already-existing material lacking sex fairness. (YLB)

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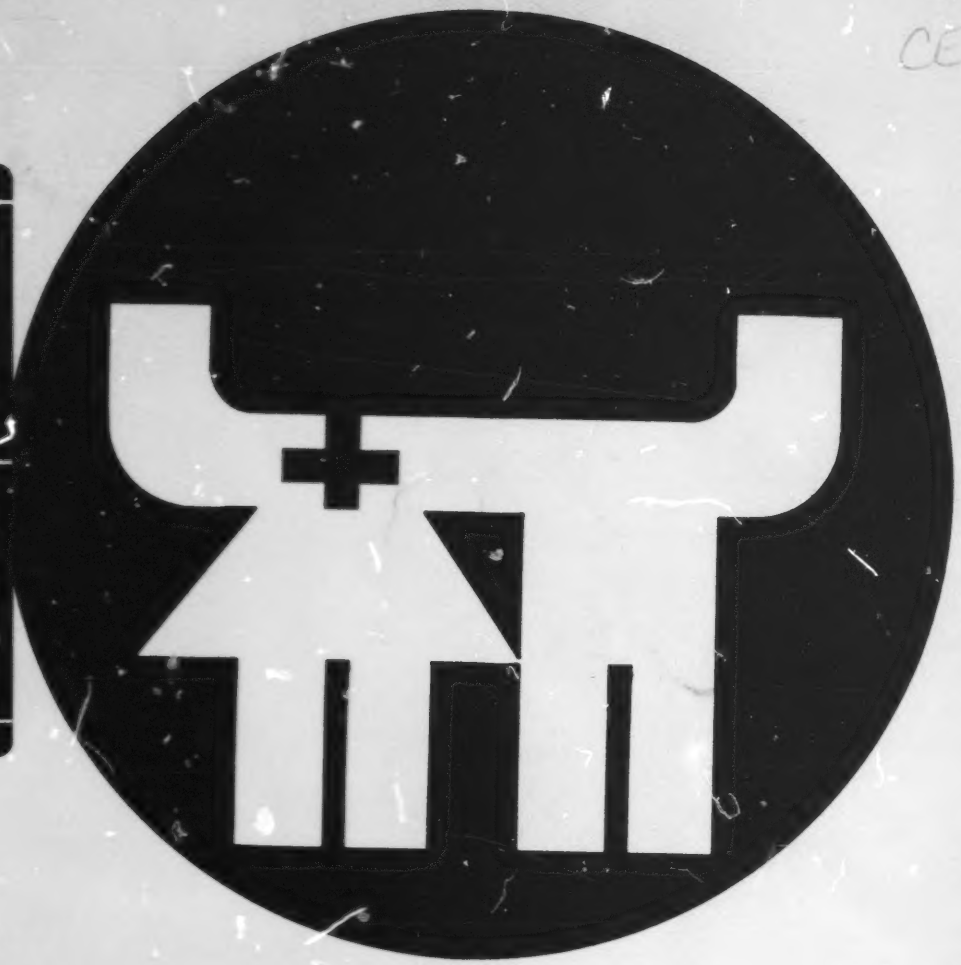

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IMPROVING SEX EQUITY IN CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

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FOREWORD

Public schools have a legal and moral responsibility to help all students develop their intellectual, emotional and physical abilities to the fullest extent possible. Sex bias, sex role stereotyping and sex discrimination have no place in our modern technological society. Such facts are rarely expressed directly in a philosophy or identified specifically in a plan, but attitudes and practices which support them hurt people of both sexes. Students must learn that sex roles do not relate to the field of employment.

The curriculum guidelines and checklists in this booklet have been designed to assist educators in identifying sex bias, sex role stereotyping and sex discrimination. It provides suggestions for selection of non-biased materials, use of already existing material lacking sex fairness and lists several consciousness-raising activities which may be helpful to teachers, counselors and students.

Sex equity is especially important for vocational educators as they prepare youth for the work world. For this reason the contents of this booklet were written with the vocational teacher in mind. In fact, 30 vocational educators from around the state of Ohio were involved in its conception and development. A two-day workshop was held in Columbus, sponsored by the Vocational Division of the State Department of Education in May, 1978. This publication represents a compilation of these efforts. We will be ever grateful for their assistance, ideas and patience.

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PROVIDING FOR SEX EQUITY IN VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Vocational educators, as much as any other single group in our society, have both the responsibility and means to do something about the complex problem of occupational sex stereotyping. Vocational educators are at the critical point between school and work. They recruit students, provide them with the knowledge and skills needed for successful job entry and place students in their first jobs. The responsibility is great; the challenge is exciting--few people have the opportunity to contribute in such an important way in providing equal educational opportunities for all people.

Following are suggestions made by Ohio vocational educators for providing for sex equity in vocational programs.

RECRUITMENT - Students must be given information about all occupations available to them. Care must be taken when presenting the programs to prospective students to avoid sex stereotyping.

- Is unbiased information about all programs available to all students?
- Are skill area teachers included in recruitment and selection of students?
- Is recruitment based on occupational objective, interest and aptitude, not on the basis of sex of student?
- Are knowledgeable personnel available to students to discuss all available programs with them?
- Are nontraditional role models available, especially at recruitment time?
- Are nonsexist course descriptions used?
- Are parents involved in presenting nonsexist information?
- Are parents supportive of nontraditional course selection by their children?
- Are students prepared for peer pressure resulting from a nontraditional career choice?

FACILITY - One of the most important tools used in training the prospective employee for the work environment is the facility. All barriers, both real and imagined, must be removed so students will feel free to enter any program.

- Do display materials and equipment reflect sex equity? (male and female mannequins, bulletin boards and posters)
- Are rest rooms and changing rooms equally available to both sexes?
- Are appropriate uniforms available for both sexes?
- Are frequent inquiries made of both students and teachers regarding the suitability of the facility for both sexes?
- Are all facilities neat, clean and functionally attractive regardless of program?

PLACEMENT - Due to recent legislation and changing attitudes, many careers formerly reserved for one sex are now open to qualified applicants of both sexes. Students must be aware of this and actively placed in nontraditional occupations.

- Are brochures and other literature describing job opportunities sex-fair?
- Are students given assistance in coping with peer pressure that accompanies entrance into a nontraditional job?
- Are efforts made to eliminate sex biased images of certain jobs?
- Are parents encouraged to support students who enter nontraditional occupations?
- Is assistance provided to all students to sell themselves and their abilities to future employers?

PROGRAM CONTENT - All programs must reflect a commitment to sex equity in course content. This includes both attitude and everyday activities of teacher and student alike.

- Do guest speakers represent nontraditional role models?
- Are consciousness-raising activities used as part of classroom instruction?
- Are youth group activities administered without regard to the sex of the member?
- Are skill and performance the basis for success in program, disregarding whether male or female?
- Do classroom activities reflect equal participation of both sexes in the classroom evaluated periodically?

The following suggestions and comments were devised by teachers and supervisors of the respective program areas of study:

DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION

Distributive education programs prepare students for jobs that are available in the retail, wholesale and service fields. Although it would appear that in the sales and marketing field, job opportunities are equally available to both men and women, there are jobs in these fields that are, by employment practice, sexist. Placing students in non-stereotyped jobs presents a very real concern. Some of the stereotyped jobs are in the fields of food service, warehousing, petroleum service management, auto parts sales and supermarket management.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The career development of all students will be sex-fair as evidenced by the school districts' plans for sex equity in: staff development, curriculum development, community involvement, career guidance and material resources.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

All occupations in the agricultural industry employ both males and females. Recent successes of both sexes in occupations which were formerly sex stereotyped have brought about a new awareness for sex equity in agricultural education. In recognition of these occupational opportunities, it is imperative that instructional programs be developed to reflect a complete equality of sexes. The ability to do the job must be the final criterion in determining success both in the classroom and on the job.

TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Sex role stereotyping is both a partial result of the socialization process and a continuation of it. Schools should provide nontraditional role models, increase the occupational options presented to young people and point out restrictive attitudes. The responsibility for change lies with advisory committees, administrators, teachers, counselors, parents and students.

GUIDANCE

Guidance programs must involve skill area teachers in recruitment and selection. At some point the teachers must be involved in recruitment and selection because they have the field expertise which is a big part of the body of information that educators owe students in order that viable career decisions can be made. A counselor/teacher team for recruitment and selection is the best approach to efficient guidance.

HOME ECONOMICS

Sex equity guidelines can assist comprehensive and job training home economics teachers to recognize and change sexist materials and policies that may exist in their programs. Home economists have a responsibility to help individuals adapt to these sociological changes through rational decision-making. Consumer home economics classes should emphasize skills which are important to everyone who eats, wears clothes, lives in some kind of housing, manages money and other resources, is a family member or who has parental responsibilities. The Home Economics classroom is an ideal place to give young people a chance to experiment with new and changing role concepts.

INDUSTRIAL ARTS

Industrial Arts should be a part of the learning experiences of all students at all levels of grade and ability in order that they may understand and learn to control their industrial-technological environment. Laboratory activities providing technical skills and knowledge basic to many occupations and professions lead the student toward self-development, informed career preferences and a more sophisticated view of knowing and making the most of today's world.

OCCUPATIONAL WORK ADJUSTMENT

The Occupational Work Adjustment program is designed to provide classroom and work experience for 14 and 15 year old students. Selection procedures for enrollment of students into the OWA programs do not afford an opportunity for females on an equal basis with male students. This is evidenced by the fact that 30 percent of the students enrolled in OWA are female. Job placement for OWA students seems to be aligned with the sexism typical of stereotyped positions. These stereotyped placement practices must be changed if all jobs are to be available for all persons.

BUSINESS AND OFFICE EDUCATION

Business and Office Education program graduates have secured jobs in many areas of business and office employment. It is recognized that in the past many traditional office skills such as typing and shorthand were considered as sex stereotyped in nature. With the advent of business and office education programs and new diversified job descriptions, we shall develop new instructional programs to reflect the changing work roles in our society.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR SEX EQUITY

Within the Education Amendments of 1972, a law, Title IX, was enacted to prohibit sex discrimination . . .

"under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

There are no specific mandates for curriculum, but sex-fair materials will support the intent of the Act in significant ways.

The following guidelines for sex-fair materials were prepared with these criteria in mind:

1. 50-50 balance of males and females in any material;
2. Sex neutral or sex-fair language;
3. Specific mention of issues involved in nontraditional career choices for males and females;
4. Sex-fair occupational descriptions that accurately reflect performance required.

A reading of these guidelines and checklists is valuable for increasing awareness of sexism in materials; however, all sections may not be applicable to your needs and therefore may be omitted from the review process.

LANGUAGE

The structure of the English language itself involves implied stereotyping of males and females due to the frequent use of masculine, singular pronouns; the common use of the word "man" when referring to all people; the existence of "masculine-marker" words such as chairman and manpower; and the use of certain words, phrases and constructions which demean or patronize women, or cast them in subordinate roles. Eliminating sexist language will not eliminate sexist conduct, but as the language is liberated from sexist usages and assumptions, women and men will begin to share more equal roles.

GUIDELINES

- Use a neutral term when describing an occupation rather than a sex-specific term.
- Use a neutral term that includes both sexes.
- Use inclusive terms or alternate order of gendered words.
- Men and women should be referred to in a consistent way throughout.
- All people should be referred to as having their own identity.
- Use the word woman or female and man or male in a consistent way.

EXAMPLES:

Sex Biased	Sex-Fair
salesman	salesperson/salesworker
housewife	homemaker
coed	student
Gentlemen:	Colleagues:, To Whom It May Concern:
A man-sized job	A big job
he/she	human beings
men and women	people
men and ladies	men and women
man and wife	wife and husband
John Smith and his wife, Jane	John and Jane Smith
I'll have my girl type this.	I'll have the secretary type this.

CHECKLIST –

_____ Is a neutral term used when describing an occupation?

_____ Are references made so that people have their own identity?

_____ Are the words women and female used in consistent ways?

_____ Is the order alternated when using pronouns? (he/she; she/he)

_____ Are demeaning or patronizing terms avoided?

_____ Are descriptions of women in terms of appearance or marital status avoided?

ROLES

Instructional materials have contributed to stereotyping which limits the maximum fulfillment of aspirations and capabilities of many people. Avoiding role stereotyping involves representing with fairness and balance and with equal dignity and respect the members of both sexes. Individuals must be represented as whole human beings with human strengths and weaknesses; as possessing the full range of human interests, capabilities and ambitions; and in balanced representation when fictitious people are used in narrative and examples.

GUIDELINES

- Present all occupations as possible for both sexes.
- Portray both males and females as displaying the full range of human traits.
- Encourage students to discover all types of work and to obtain necessary skills to achieve success.
- Address discussions of family responsibilities to both sexes.
- Point out any tokenism in the material being used.

EXAMPLES:

Sex Biased	Sex-Fair
Dental hygienists, the girls in white, earn about $8,000.	Dental hygienists earn about $8,000.
Gruffness, brusqueness, snapping remarks are all resented more deeply by women than are long hours and low pay. (Advice to an an executive)	People resent all forms of such treatment.

CHECKLIST –

_____ Are all occupations presented as appropriate for qualified persons of either sex?

_____ Are certain jobs automatically associated with women and others associated with men?

_____ Is the wife presented as needing permission from her husband in order to work?

_____ Is it assumed that the boss will be male and the assistant will be female?

_____ Are men and women portrayed as having sex-linked personality traits that influence their working abilities?

_____ If a couple works together in a business,is it assumed that she will assist him (Mary does typing while John decides policy)?

OMISSIONS

The realities of past and present discriminations must be confronted and discussed. Special care must be taken that instructional materials do not overlook past discriminations which have existed. Many occupational education materials are sex biased because of omissions. As a result, students are denied adequate information on which to base their career choices.

GUIDELINES

- Research the field for examples of contributions by both males and females when giving biographical references.
- Include adequate discussion concerning nontraditional career choices for males and females.
- Discuss past and present discriminations against women in employment and promotion policies and practices.
- Reflect the role of affirmative action programs, laws and governmental agencies in correcting discriminatory practices.

EXAMPLES:

Sex Biased	Sex-Fair
Jean Piaget's theories of child development have influenced education today.	Jean Piaget and Maria Montessori are among those whose contributions to child development have influenced education today.
Walter Cronkite has had a major impact in the field of news broadcasting.	Barbara Walters and Walter Cronkite have made major contributions to the field of news broadcasting.

CHECKLIST –

_____ Does the text deal with the increasing movement of both men and women into nontraditional occupations?

_____ In historical and biographical references are women adequately acknowledged for their achievements?

_____ Are there discussions of the nontraditional choices that are available to both sexes?

_____ Are quotes and anecdotes from women in history and from important living women used as frequently as those from men?

_____ Are comments by and about women well integrated into the text or are they grouped on a separate page, or in a separate paragraph or chapter?

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

Illustrations are an important communication method, especially in educational materials. Visual images have a powerful impact and must reflect the equality of males and females. Illustrations reinforce the images presented in the text. Too often, these images imply that proper behavior and appropriate roles for females differ from that for males.

GUIDELINES

- Group images should be sex-fair and display a full range of body types, ages and ethnic groups.
- Graphics and text should be consistently sex-fair.
- Include an equal distribtution of sexes in all jobs as well as in family and social roles.
- Show children imitating adults free to select any roles, in daily living, in home chores or at play.
- Avoid using stereotyped caricatures which belittle men or women.
- Use a mixture of sexes for background figures in charts and graphs.
- Include female and male voices in audio materials throughout the full range of situations and occupational tasks.

EXAMPLES:

Sex Biased

In this illustration males outnumber and overshadow females.

Sex-Fair

This illustration includes a variety of racial and body types and is sex equal.

Sex Biased

It is assumed here that a welder is male.

Affirmative Action Pictures

Children are imitating traditional adult roles.

This illustration shows children in nontraditional adult roles.

CHECKLIST –

_____ Do group illustrations show males and females in equal numbers?

_____ Is there an equal distribution among the sexes in all jobs including family and social roles?

_____ Are charts, graphs and caricatures free from sex stereotyping?

_____ Are both male and female voices used in the narration of audio materials?

_____ Are children shown imitating adults in nontraditional roles?

_____ Do illustrations reflect a variety of dress for women and men in various occupations?

CLASSROOM SEX BIAS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Much sex stereotyping in the schools is not the result of conscious behavior on the part of educators. We do not purposefully set out to teach boys that it is somehow less "masculine" to do things that don't require strength, or to be interested in music and art, or to be interested in learning to be a parent. Neither are we deliberately teaching girls that they are to be less strong than the boys, that they are not to be athletes and that they are not to be interested in and capable of doing work in science and mathematics. We stereotype students by sex because we have been taught to. However, purposeful or not, the effects on students are the same--they learn to conform to what is expected of them.

Following are activities which require no special materials or training that can be used in any classroom to help raise the consciousness of teachers and students alike to the sex stereotyping which we have all been taught.

* Encourage students to interview people who depart from the traditonal male and female occupational roles. Have them ask about the advantages, the problems, their self-images and the way others view them.

* Hold a contest for the "sexist ad of the year" with each student bringing in an entry and the class voting on the winner.

* Show a film twice. The second time turn off the sound and ask students to discuss how the characters are portrayed.

* Have students bring in Dear Abby and Ann Landers columns dealing with male and female behavior, sex roles and relationships. Have students write nonsexist responses.

* Have students search out characters in books, plays and TV shows who depart from traditional sex roles.

* Ask students to list jobs as "male" and "female"; discuss whether each job could be done as well by a man or a woman.

* Have students observe and discuss how teachers stereotype students; e.g., boys carry boxes, are supposed to be good at math, are good athletes; girls decorate bulletin boards, write neater papers. How do students react to this stereotyping? To what degree do students accept and/or encourage this stereotyping?

* Encourage students to rewrite stories containing sex stereotyping. Have them draw new illustrations and display them in the classroom.

* Have students list as many job titles as they can think of. How many titles have the implied sex of the job holder (repairman)? Develop new nonsexist titles.

* Ask students to evaluate TV ads aimed at children. Suggest that students write letters to station managers to complain about stereotyped images.

CREATIVE USE OF SEX BIASED MATERIALS

A large percentage of the vocational education materials currently in use in schools are sex biased. Occupations and social roles have been defined and portrayed on the basis of sex. This bias considerably limits the scope of occupations presented to males and females.

For economic reasons, and in some instances because of unavailability of nonbiased materials, schools will continue to use biased materials. The following suggestions are intended to aid vocational educators in dealing with sex biases contained in these materials in such a way as to lessen their effects. They will help prepare students more realistically for the future and aid more students in realizing their career potentials.

The U.S. Office of Education, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education suggests the following questions to use as guidelines when reviewing for sex bias.

MASCULINE GENERIC FORMS:

Do the female members of the class feel a part of the generic class labeled mankind?
Why should generic male terms be used to indicate both males and females?
If it is really meant to be inclusive, why not use a gender-free term such as human race?

MASCULINE GENDER NOUNS:

Do female students feel excluded from occupational categories labeled businessman, salesman, foreman?
Shouldn't we use common gender nouns such as firefighters, salesperson or businessperson, which are nonbiased and do not exclude people on the basis of sex?

DISPARAGING WORDS:

Are adjectives such as cute, attractive or beautiful appropriate for the occupations?
What are the students' reactions to the use of girl instead of woman?
What is required physically of the person doing the job?
Should occupations be determined on the basis of sexuality or on the basis of ability, interest and desire?

SUBORDINATE ROLES:

Are women only shown in secondary roles in the materials?
For example, are executives always male and secretaries always female?
Should reverse situations be shown?
Why?
Could women with equal training and experience do the job just as effectively?
Do the materials being used reflect what exists in society?
If they do, should this situation continue to exist?
Why?
Are individuals or society losing anything from this?

TOKENISM:

Are women and men only occasionally illustrated in nontraditional occupations?

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES:

Is unnecessary reference made to physical attributes, such as the "attractive" secretary or the "good looking" vice president?

PERSONAL TRAITS:

Make a list of positive job-related traits.
Do the students see some of these as desirable only for males or only for females?
Why?
Have males and females been socialized differently?
Should these traits be encouraged in all human beings?

OMISSIONS:

Have either males or females been omitted from traditionally sex stereotyped occupations?
Why couldn't members of either sex do a particular job?
What are the students' reactions to the use of boy in place of man?
What does the phrase "the boys in the office" connote?
Contrast these reactions to "the men in the office".
Are the reactions to girl and woman different from boy and man?
Do they have different connotations?
Who might use the phrase "the girls in the office" or "the boys in the office".
Does who is using the phrase make a difference?
Should this kind of language be used in vocational education materials?
Why?

Resources used in compiling this booklet were:

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"Project Awareness: A Multi-State Leadership Project Addressing Sex Discrimination Issues", developed by Feminists Northwest, through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia, Washington, 1976.